Under the Blossom.

BY MARGARET HAYCRAFT, AUTHOR OF "LINDENHOLM," "AMARANTH'S GARDEN," ETC.

CHAPTER III.

ST. ALWYS' GARDENS.

MISS CROCKARD, an old friend of the Elwood family, readily consented to set Iris free from her duties at once, and the girl entered delightedly into all the bustle of preparations for her London visit. Very little of her salary found its way this term into the household purse; the money was just due, as the long holidays were near, and Iris found many uses for it as concerned her own wardrobe. She did not see, or she too easily forgot, how worn and shabby was Mrs. Elwood's one black dress, how evidently the mother's bonnet and mantle needed renewing, and how little Mrs. Elwood went out, lest there should be the need of new boots and gloves. Like many other mothers, Mrs. Elwood thought last of her own needs, and was far more careful to make provision for the wants of the young folks. Nelly often longed for the power of earning money, so that she could surprise her mother by the gift of some material to replenish her scanty wardrobe; but Iris, so long as she was daintily attired herself, seemed to think it quite natural that "Mother" should be content with apparel that long since had seen its best days! So Mrs. Elwood continued to wear the brown-black merino, and Iris started for town in a neat fawn-coloured beige costume, with a pretty cape to match, and a hat that the mirror owned as remarkably becoming.

She was rather disconcerted at having to travel third-class, especially as her former school-fellow, Mrs. Burnet, the banker's wife, was on the platform with footman and maid in attendance, and recognised her, as she chose to imagine, with a somewhat patronising glance. But Mrs. Danyers had sent no travelling money, and the third-class ticket was taken by necessity. It was only a passing annoyance, for the scenery was so beautiful along the line, and the anticipation of London life was so vivid, that Iris thoroughly enjoyed the journey; and expectation was at its height by the time the train steamed into Paddington, and she knew she was fairly launched upon her much dreamed-of experiences in the great metropolis.

A stylish-looking though quietly-attired individual came forward towards her through the crowd, and, as she glanced round her uncertainly, asked if she were Miss Elwood from

"A nice confidential chat." *p.* 114.

Bayston. Iris concluded this must be Leila Danyers, and felt relieved she had not greeted her thus when her new acquaintance said—

"I am Mrs. Danyers' maid, and the carriage is outside. Please tell me what luggage you have brought, and Harris and the porter will find it."

Very soon Iris was being wheeled away in a cosy little carriage to St. Alwys' Gardens; she was rather silent and constrained, for, despite the pains her mother and Nelly had taken with her fawn dress, she somehow felt that in the eyes of her companion it looked countrified and behind the times. Poor Iris made the mistake of continually thinking concerning other people's opinions. Could she but have known it, Stevens was occupied just then in wondering if they would reach home in time for her to dress her mistress for dinner. The train had been late, and Mrs. Danyers was not one to make allowances. Stevens was anxious to stay on in that situation, for the wages were good, and she kept her old parents out of the union. She could have given the young visitor a few valuable lessons in filial consideration.

Iris did not see Mrs. Danyers till just before dinner, but Leila, who gave her a cup of tea on her arrival, welcomed her kindly, and turned out to be a far from alarming little personage. Iris thought she had never seen a pleasanter face. Leila was not exactly pretty, and her attire, though well-made and perfectly fitting, was quiet and simple. Certainly, it was neither beauty nor fashion that attracted Iris to her young hostess; but, as time went on, Iris understood the gentle calm and kindly expression were reflections of the heart within, that had learnt the secret of rest and peace. Leila Danyers was a bright young Christian. How it would have rejoiced Mrs. Elwood to know this, as her tender prayers followed the traveller! Truly has it been said that the Lord has His flowers of grace in strange gardens. It was difficult for Leila, in an unsympathetic and fashion-following circle, to shine for the Master, yet she did so, and many in that household were influenced by her gentle life more than she imagined or understood.

Iris soon felt quite at home with Leila, but they had little time for conversation then, as the dinner-hour was nearing. Leila's maid, a quick, willing girl, helped the visitor, and ere long Iris was in the drawing-room, where a sense of awe fell upon her in the presence of Mrs. Danyers. Imposing-looking by nature, and much addicted to expensive costumes, Leila's mother looked still but middle-aged, though in reality she was older than Mrs. Elwood, whose hair showed many a streak of grey. Mrs. Danyers had keen black eyes, and a handsome, resolute face; she looked like one who always had her own way, and Iris instinctively felt she would not like in any way to thwart or offend her hostess. Warmly and almost effusively the young visitor was welcomed; and she began to think Mrs. Danyers was kindness itself as she was called "dear one" and "my dear child," and told to consider the house of her mother's old friend as her own home. It was not till long afterwards Iris understood she was there as a sort of object-lesson to Leila, that if she crossed her mother's will and intentions, it was not difficult to adopt another heiress, the money being under the sole control of Mrs. Danyers.

"You must tell me all about your dear, good mother," said the hostess, "and your brothers and sisters—oh, is there only one brother? Come and sit by my side, and tell me all the home news; it is delightful to hear of my dearest Helen, the friend of my girlhood, again."

It did occur to Iris that a letter now and then might have brought such delight long ere this to the mind of Mrs. Danyers; but she felt too flattered by the warmth of her reception, and by the favourable impression she had evidently made upon her grand-looking hostess, to be aught but grateful and admiring, and anxious to please. So she described her country home and told of Nelly and the twins, and promised to show the portraits of her mother and the others after dinner; but, somehow, of John Hyldon she said nothing—shyness or some other motive prevented any allusion to him—and Mrs. Danyers did not seem to notice the ring on her left hand, for she spoke playfully of damage that would no doubt be done to many a heart among their friends and acquaintances by the arrival of "such a little country mouse with such violets of eyes!"

The dinner, set forth with silver and flowers, commended itself to Iris in every way; but the butler looked so dignified, and the footman was so attentive to her needs, that she felt a little nervous this first evening, and it was a relief to her when the meal was ended.

"Leila, go and play something," said her mother, rather coldly, when they were again in the drawing-room. "I want a nice confidential chat with this dear child, so go and give us some music, unless you consider it worldly to amuse your mother, and part of your religion to disobey her."

"Mother dear!" said Leila, colouring and looking distressed. She went at once to the piano, and Iris would fain have listened to the sweet strains drawn forth by the music-loving spirit; but Mrs. Danyers was speaking in low, confidential tones, and Iris was too anxious to be on good terms with her hostess not to listen with interest and politeness.

"You come, my dear," said Mrs. Danyers, "at a time when my nerves are quite out of order—wholly unstrung, and indeed in such a condition that I am under treatment by Sir Eustace Traver, a specialist for sufferers like myself."

Iris murmured sympathy, and wondered what could be amiss with one who looked the very opposite of an invalid.

"I have had a heavy domestic trial," continued her hostess, "in the waywardness and caprice of my only child, who might have married a title but for her ridiculously Puritanical notions. I have no patience with the idea of young girls presuming to judge the characters of those whom their parents select for them; but that is past, and the extremely eligible *parti* is now a married man, so I will not enter into details of what was to me a great annoyance and distress."

Iris did not quite know what to say. "These things are very trying" was the safe remark on which she ventured timidly.

"Ah, dear one, what we mothers go through only a mother's heart can know. I feel you have been brought up to be filial and dutiful and so forth, and you will be a great comfort to me, I can see, amid poor Leila's wayward and eccentric proceedings."

"I think you said in your letter to mother that Miss Danyers is delicate," said Iris.

"Yes, my dear, I feel sure her nerves must be disordered, and I had hoped that going out into society would work her cure, but she still holds some very strange opinions. When I had to travel about with her poor father, we left her in a school where I fear the influence of one of the teachers made the child quite a little fanatic. On her joining us, I was dismayed to find my daughter much more interested in some union that worked for the poor and for missionary

societies—just think of it!—than enjoying herself at parties and so on, as is natural to young people. She was a good little nurse to her poor father and a great comfort in his last days—I will say that of her—and as a rule she is an obedient, sweet-tempered child still; but somehow she has set her face against Sunday entertainments and 'at homes' and so on, so now I just let her go her own way, and manage without her. I shall be so glad to have you, dear child, for my little companion to-morrow! I always run into Mrs. Druce-Farwick's 'at home,' and you will thoroughly enjoy it, and meet quite the best people there, I assure you. I consider myself responsible for you now, my dear, and it shall not be my fault if your stay with me is not only very happy, but a real success. You must try and atone to me, my child, for the disappointment I have suffered through the wilfulness of poor Leila!"

CHAPTER IV.

A VISITOR FOR IRIS.

"WAS it Sunday at all?" Iris asked herself more than once next day. The breakfast-gong sounded when those at home were already, she knew, at the morning service, and though she had been ready some time, she did not like to go down before she heard the summons.

"You must not think we Londoners are heathen," said Mrs. Danyers, smilingly, as Iris kissed her rather timidly; "I usually go to church on Sunday mornings—I think it is only right to set a good example to one's servants. But this afternoon I am driving to Hampstead to see some pictures in a friend's studio—you will be so interested, Iris, for I am sure you have a soul for art—and then I am due at Mrs. Druce-Farwick's, so I feel I must save myself to-day. Sir Eustace Traver warns me against exhausting the nervous system, and I feel I must lie down till lunch, so I shall get you to read me to sleep."

The book chosen was the lightest of novels, but Iris went through the opening chapter obediently, though troubled and uncomfortable; the girl's thoughts were far from the narrative she was reading. These Sunday "at homes" perplexed her; she wondered what they were like, and whether she did wrong in accompanying Mrs. Danyers, she who had been so differently trained, and whose Sundays at Bayston had been so happy and quiet—real days of rest and praise and glad service in the Sunday-school. Leila came into lunch, which on Sundays she made her dinner, though late dinner was served as usual, at half-past seven. Leila had a class of children in connection with some mission, and Iris would have liked to hear all about it and to have gone there too in the afternoon; but the subject evidently annoyed Mrs. Danyers, so her guest prudently avoided it.

At the end of the day the girl felt thoroughly tired, and worn out—the Sabbath hours had seemed to go round "in mazes of heat and sound." The drive to Hampstead had been pleasant, and the studio a dream of delight; then afternoon tea at Mrs. Druce-Farwick's had been gay and enjoyable, and there had been some charming music. "After all, where was the harm?" thought Iris, laying her tired head upon the pillow. But somehow it had not seemed at all like Sunday—not at all like an oasis in the journey of life—that day of visiting, and of chit-chat as to the doings of society, and plans for the pleasures of the week.

As time went on, Iris found Leila had much more to do for Mrs. Danyers than she had supposed. The girl always read her mother to sleep at night, wrote her letters for her, and managed much of her business. Leila loved her mother tenderly, and by no means neglected her home-duties—it was only when conscience forbade her aught, that Leila ever absented herself when Mrs. Danyers desired her company. The mother allowed her to take part in a society that looked after the recreation of poor children, because "some quite unobjectionable people were connected with it." Leila was happy in making others happy, and meanwhile Iris went everywhere with her hostess, who lent her handsome jewellery, and gave her some very becoming apparel, and made quite a pet of the pretty, attractive girl. At first Iris wrote often to Bayston and to John—letters full of enjoyment and delight in the new life that was such a contrast to all she had hitherto known; but soon the correspondence became more fitful, for the glamour of the present eclipsed the past, and becoming the focus of admiration amid a brilliant circle resulted in dimming within the girlish heart the image of John Hyldon.

It was a rainy afternoon. Leila had gone in her waterproof to see a former maid who was ill, and Mrs. Danyers was lying down. Iris was wondering if anyone interesting would call that wet day, and she was turning over the pages of a fashion publication, when she heard a ring, and the footman announced "Mr. Harper."

"Miss Hiris, I presume?" said a stalwart, good-tempered looking man, the sight of whom brought the colour to the girl's face, for she had wholly forgotten John Hyldon's Peckham relatives.

What a dreadful visitor for Mrs. Danyers to see! Was this really Jack's brother-in-law, this vulgar creature who found a difficulty with his H's?

"Is it Mr. Harper from Peckham?" she faltered, forgetting to ask him to be seated.

"Yes, miss, James 'Arper, of Mountain Hash Cottage, not far off from the Rye. And finding myself, so to say, in your vicinity to-day on a matter of business, thinks I, I'll kill two birds with one stone, and see young Jack's sweetheart, and get her over to Peckham on a visit! The wife sends her kind love, Miss Hiris, and hopes you'll favour us soon—suit yourself as to the time, and you'll suit us. I suppose you know young Jack is coming up to London to see some publishers or something of the sort in a few weeks?"

"No, I have not heard," said Iris, not looking as charmed to hear the news as he evidently expected.

"Ah, then he meant to take you by surprise, depend upon it, miss! Yes, he's coming up to town, and maybe he'll hang up his hat at his sister's; but don't you wait till then—give us a few days whenever you feel so disposed."

"Thank you, Mr. Harper," said Iris, stiffly, "but I really have no leisure for visiting—all my time is engaged, and I must decline Mrs. Harper's kind invitation to Peckham. How very wet, is it not? Did you come in a hansom?"

"Yes, miss, for I brought neither top-coat nor umbrella, the morning being so promising. It's clearing up a bit now, though, and I promised the wife I wouldn't miss the sight of you to-day, being so handy. The wife's real interested in you, Miss Hiris, seeing you keep company with her only brother."

The girl's cheeks flamed. "It is very kind of Mrs. Harper," she said; "there—there was a sort of friendship between her brother and myself, but, really, things are so different now."

"You don't mean as the engagement is broke off, surely, miss?" asked Harper, looking much concerned. "Now I

come to think of it, the wife was remarking only yesterday as how young Jack's letters didn't seem over-cheerful of late, but we set it down to his working too hard with his brain. I hope, Miss Hiris, it will turn out only a lover's quarrel, as the saying is."

"There is no quarrel at all," said Iris, rather pettishly. "Well, I must not detain you, Mr. Harper—these cabmen charge extra for waiting, you know."

Just then Mrs. Danyers entered the room, followed by her pug with silver collar and embroidered coat. Mr. Harper hastened to bow politely, and nearly fell over the pug, much to the indignation of Fifine and her mistress.

"Who is this, Iris?" asked Mrs. Danyers, putting up her glass, and gazing with perplexity at the visitor.

"Someone somebody I know knows," said Iris, stammeringly—"he is just going. Really, Mr. Harper, I must ask you to excuse me; my engagements are so very numerous that it will be quite impossible for me to visit Mrs. Harper. Good afternoon," and she laid her hand upon the bell.

"Since nobody has introduced us, ma'am," said Mr. Harper, "I'll take the liberty of handing you my card; and my wife would have had the pleasure of bearing me company, but the little one can't well be left just now, seeing as he is teething. Well, miss, I won't detain you, seeing you're so busy; but you'll find a welcome with us any time you are so disposed, and it isn't a very long run from Victoria."

Harper had intended drawing forth one of his visiting cards, but being rather nervous beneath the bewildered scrutiny of Mrs. Danyers, he produced a business card instead, and, after his departure, the two read with horrified looks beneath his name the inscription, "*Milk Purveyor.*"

"A milkman!" gasped Mrs. Danyers, "and he actually put out his hand in leaving! My dear Iris, is it possible this person is a friend of yours or of your family? Perhaps he married a former servant?"

"He is no friend of ours," said Iris, quickly, "we do not know him at all, and I am astonished he should be so impertinent as to pay me a visit—a man who drops his H's and is quite a common person."

"But how did he come to call here, Iris, unless he knew something of you?"

"Oh," said Iris, rather falteringly, "his wife's brother lives near Bayston; his wife is his superior, I should think, but I really do not know her. We—we knew the brother, and he must have told his Peckham friends of my coming to London, for this person called to ask me to go and see them. Of course, I said it was impossible."

"The lower classes are always intrusive," said Mrs. Danyers; "you must let Harris understand that you are not at home, should that extremely objectionable person call again. And to think of his bringing his wife here! Really, Iris, I wonder your poor mother let you form such acquaintances. Just suppose the Druce-Farwicks or the Ramsay-Luptons had happened to call this afternoon!"

And Iris crimsoned with annoyance as she thought of "James 'Arper," and how his visit might have imperilled herself in the favour of Mrs. Danyers and the esteem of that lady's *coterie*. *(To be continued.)*

A WEDDING.

ONCE more the words that make twain one are spoken,
The sweet "I will" is murmured soft and faint;
The golden circlet—love's familiar token—
Upon the finger puts its sweet constraint.

Now hand-in-hand before the altar kneeling,
They hear the benediction uttered low;
And while triumphal organ notes are pealing,
Down through the crowded aisle they proudly go.

The golden light through blazoned panes is streaming,
The minster bells ring out their merry cheer;
Two happy hearts, whose eyes through tears are gleaming,
Re-enter that lost Eden ever dear.

Dear Lord, who long ago didst give Thy blessing
At Cana's marriage feast, grant that this pair
May go through life, each other's love possessing,
Until the heavenly Eden's joys they share.

ALEX. SMALL.

THE PERFECT WIFE.

ON the anniversary of their marriage Edmund Burke presented to his wife this pen portrait of her charms. It may serve as a mirror in which wives of the present day may view themselves:—

"She is handsome, but it is a beauty not arising from features, from complexion, or from shape. She has all three in a high degree, but it is not by these she touches a heart; it is all that sweetness of temper, benevolence, innocence, and sensibility which a face can express that forms her beauty. She has a face that just raises your attention at first sight; it grows on you every moment, and you wonder it did no more than raise your attention at first.

"Her eyes have a mild light, but they awe when she pleases; they command like a good man out of office, not by authority, but by virtue. Her stature is not tall; she is not made to be the admiration of everybody, but the happiness of one. She has all the firmness that does not exclude delicacy; she has all the softness that does not imply weakness.

"Her voice is a soft, low music, not formed to rule in public assemblies, but to charm those who can distinguish a company from a crowd; it has this advantage, *you must come close to her to hear it.* To describe her body describes her mind—one is the transcript of the other; her understanding is not shown in the variety of matters it exerts itself on, but in the goodness of the choice she makes. She does not display it so much in saying or doing striking things, as in avoiding such as she ought *not* to say and do.

"No person of so few years can know the world better; no person was ever less corrupted by the knowledge. Her politeness flows rather from a natural disposition to oblige than from any rules on the subject, and therefore never fails to strike those who understand good breeding and those who do not. She has a steady and firm mind, which takes no more from the solidity of the female character than the solidity of marble does from its polish and lustre. She has such virtue as makes us value the truly great of our own sex. She has all the winning graces that make

us love even the faults we see in the weak and beautiful in hers."

With such a wife, is it surprising that Burke could aver "that every care vanished the moment he sheltered beneath his own roof"? or that in his eyes no other woman was comparable with her? Of course, the great orator had a poetic, enthusiastic, and appreciative nature, which idealised the simplest virtue of her he loved. But allowing all deductions for his enthusiasm, there must have been some splendid qualities in her to call forth such a tribute.

Is there not a lesson here for every wife? Surely it is that she should so cultivate her every gift, that her influence over her husband may be all-powerful and beneficent. Only thus may she win his sincere regard and loyal allegiance, and enjoy the deep happiness of a truly united married life. Not for a moment should she allow herself to fall into the rear in her journey of life with him who is pledged to her till death's parting. Side by side, in mutual helpfulness, should the earthly travelling be accomplished. So will affection increase, even in the dark days of adversity, and the golden ties of earlier years only bind in a still happier service of trust and love.

"Through the crowded aisle they proudly go." p. 116.

WHAT MAKES BABY CRY?

BY GORDON STABLES, M.D., AUTHOR OF "THE WIFE'S GUIDE TO HEALTH," ETC.

"The tear fell gently from her eye,
When last we parted on the shore."—*Old Lay.*

YES, the tear fell gently from her eye, but in the case to which I allude, the lady was not parting with anyone on the shore. Mrs. Moir was a young mother, and she sat at the open window of her snug little parlour in the evening of a warm summer's day, gently rocking her baby in her arms, the tears falling silently over her face. Baby had just dropped off.

She looked up at me wistfully, woefully, as I came quietly towards her, and said almost in a whisper—

"It is the first time, doctor, that he has slept for many hours. He will just fret and cry in his peevish way almost night and day, and I can do nothing with him. I am nearly worn out myself."

And indeed she looked it, poor thing! I didn't know which to pity most, the child or the mother.

"What do you think can ail him, doctor? What medicine must I give him?"

"Before we talk about medicine we must find out the cause of his trouble." This was my reply.

"He is three months old," I continued, "and he does not look at all a well-nourished child. In fact, you are starving him!"

"Oh, doctor, I would lay down my life for him!"

"I know you would, and that is precisely what you are doing. He is pulling you down, and your milk is not strong enough to support him. It is the miseries of infantile dyspepsia and nervousness—for even a baby has nerves, you know—that are afflicting him. Now, I don't desire you to wean him entirely, but he must have the bottle as well as the breast. Two or three bottles he should have during the day, and your own milk at night."

I may tell you at once, reader, that with proper treatment this baby ceased to cry, and soon began to grow healthy and strong, and so did the mother; but thousands of children are starved to death on the mother's milk every year.

When baby's natural food is insufficient in quantity, or poor in quality, warm cow's milk, with the addition of hot water and sugar, with a little lime-water, should be given to him, according to his age. Be most careful to have the milk from a healthy cow. To make sure it contains nothing dangerous, it should be boiled. Two feeding-bottles should be used, one being kept in steep, and so thoroughly cleansed, while the other is in baby's arms.

I must tell you, however, that as a rule, baby should need nothing but his mother's milk until the first teeth begin to come, and therefore the mother herself should be well nourished. Wine and stout are not needed, however.

Nervous young children that cry much are often greatly improved by having from half to a whole teaspoonful of cod liver oil twice or thrice a day. This may help to give them a good start in growing.

A healthy baby, remember, is not a peevish, crying child. On the contrary, he should be as happy as a lamb, and spend most of his time sleeping or taking food.

A baby will not thrive, however, unless kept scrupulously clean; but I am sorry to say that bathing and washing are far too much neglected, or improperly carried out. If the body is not kept very clean, there is no proper action of the skin, and effete matter is dammed up in the blood. A baby soon comes to like his little bath, and seems to really enjoy it. There is not the slightest danger of his catching cold if ordinary precautions are used.

Keep the doors shut, therefore, and have everything handy before you begin the operation. As soon as it is over, and the body is patted and dried with soft towels, he may be dusted or powdered in all parts where chafing is likely to take place. Then quickly and carefully dress him, and put him to bed with his bottle, if it be near his sleeping time. He will soon drop off, and won't cry for some time.

In washing a baby, do not make the mistake of using the water too warm. As he gets older, indeed, the temperature of the water should be considerably reduced. It will not be bracing if too warm, and a child whose nervous and arterial system are too much relaxed will be a peevish child, and always ready to cry.

I need hardly add that you must not bathe him *after* but *before* his feeding time. Bathe once a day before bed time, and sponge the whole body with water first thing in the morning. This water should be cooler than the evening bath. The soap must be a very good and mild one.

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I do not know anything more likely to make a baby cry than badly made, badly fitting clothes of the wrong material. For such garments ruffle up and irritate the skin, and are a constant source of annoyance to the little fellow. To be sure, I like to see a baby nicely dressed, but what are ruffles and lace and fur and finery outside compared to comfort next his skin? The best dressed babies that ever I saw in my life, and with whom I had the pleasure of shaking fingers, were—where do you think? Why, in the interior of Africa. They were as black as the inside of an empty tar barrel when the bung is in, and they wore—nothing.

"Funny little babies
That had got nodings on."

Once or twice a day their mothers—and they themselves wore no superfluities—smeared the mites over with cocoa-nut oil, and once or twice a day rubbed them with water and a soft kind of clay, then dipped them in the warm streamlet, and laid them in the grass to kick and to dry. Well, I don't quite advise mothers in this country to follow Lamoo fashions, but I tell you about these blackamore babies to give me a chance of saying that a large percentage of our children are killed with coddling. Mind you, these Lamoo babes of the wood develop into very fine savages; indeed, far finer than the ordinary British savage. We might take one lesson from them to our advantage, and let our own babies sprawl and kick about free and easy more than we do.

Our babies must be dressed in woollen clothing, very soft and clean and fine, if they are to grow up hardy and happy, with no tendency to peevishness and tears.

A too tight or too loose *binder* often makes baby cry. If too tight he has no freedom, if too loose it ruffles up.

Beware of over-clothing. Dress may be warm and still be light.

Beware of coddling a child up too much in his bassinette.

Many young children cry and fret in their perambulators. This is nearly always owing to some fault in dressing. The little chap may be crying because the cold is too much for him, and he is not sufficiently wrapped up to contend

against it. Making babies hardy may be all very well—they ought not to be mere embryo molly-coddles—but at the same time when being trotted around in their silent-wheeled carriages, they are not having quite enough movement to keep up the animal heat. A perambulator journey to a not over-strong child on a spring or summer's day, may be as trying an ordeal to its little frame as a sledge tour on a wild winter's day would be to you or me, reader.

At the same time, even in his carriage he should be loosely dressed. Protect his ears with a cap or flannel hood, and his fingers and arms with mits, and give orders that his eyes may be protected from the wind. A baby's eyesight has often been spoiled, irretrievably spoiled, from even one perambulator journey against a cold wind.

Pure, fresh air to a baby is of as much value as food. He can't live without it. In a bad atmosphere or in hot and stuffy rooms he will pine away and become a peevish and crying child as surely as if he were being starved for want of nutritious food. The room, therefore, in which he sleeps or spends his day or night should ever be well ventilated, and it ought not to be over-furnished. Large articles of furniture diminish baby's allowance of air, and curtains keep it away, while at the same time they collect the dust. Cold is a great bugbear. But the room may be well ventilated and still reasonably warm.

The baby is father of the future man. In babyhood the constitution is being built up and the foundation stone of health laid. Upon that foundation-stone the superstructure is to be built for weal or for woe. It depends upon you, mother, which it shall be. But while health and strength float on the wings of free fresh air, many an ailment, even the seeds of consumption, may float about in a stuffy and badly ventilated room.

Remember, then, that a peevish child is not a healthy child, and that crying is the only way nature has of telling us that something is wrong with baby.

MRS. CHURTON'S OPPORTUNITY.

"WHAT! Two pounds more? Two pounds merely for trimmings! *Must* you have the money, dear?"

"Well, Harold," said his wife, "it is just this. Madame Farine says I need ten yards of trimming at four shillings a yard. The dress is half finished, and really, money goes so! I'm ashamed to ask, but I am obliged to."

"Very well, my dear," replied her husband. "There is the money, but I do hope you will not ask for any more. Lately expenses have been unusually heavy."

Mrs. Churton slipped the money into her purse, with a feeling that it was dearly won, but it was so customary for her to apply to her husband for all she needed, that she almost wondered at the little pang which shot through her heart. Besides, Harold seemed to forget such matters easily, and it was but a small sum for him, after all.

So, breakfast over, Mrs. Churton dressed herself becomingly and started on her shopping expedition. On the way thoughts of her new dress ran through her mind, for she intended to wear it on an occasion which to her seemed very important. Thus absorbed, she suddenly found herself some distance beyond her destination. There was nothing for it but to walk back, and the shortest way lay through several small, narrow streets filled with miserable houses.

Hurriedly she passed along, until, all at once, she found a sort of barricade across the street. The middle object of this barricade was a sewing machine, to which on one side clung a woman, and on the other a man. The woman was crying; the tears splashed down on her hands. An attendant crowd of neighbours contemplated the scene with evident interest, and Mrs. Churton became, perforce, one of their number, and compelled to hear the conversation taking place.

"Two pounds I've paid you on that machine," the woman was saying, "and now you will not give me time! I only ask time. I'm an honest woman—I'll pay you."

"You have owed the balance for two months," replied the man. "Come, let go, missus; I don't want to take the article away, but I must obey orders. Money or the machine is what the agreement states."

Suddenly a noble thought arose in Mrs. Churton's mind. Perhaps she could save this poor woman from forfeiting her only means of gaining a livelihood? She obeyed the good impulse and pressed forward.

"Stop," she said. "Will you let this woman keep her machine if I pay you ten shillings?"

The man hesitated for a moment, then he said, "Yes, I think I may; but I must have the rest of the money pretty soon."

Then, while the crowd gathered close, and the poor woman sobbed for very joy, Mrs. Churton drew the sum named from her purse, received a receipt, and experienced for the first time the delight which the performance of a good deed brings with it.

Moreover, when the machine had been borne upstairs, Mrs. Churton, who had exchanged a few words with its owner, followed her to her miserable room, and heard all her bitter tale. It was a true one—the hot tears told that.

"But I don't mind anything now, ma'am," sobbed the narrator. "Now the machine is my very own, I don't mind how hard I work. And the only great tug is the landlord—four shillings a week for rent."

"As much a week as a yard of that trimming!" thought Mrs. Churton, with a little pang.

She questioned the woman further, and found that her landlord lived "just downstairs." And, before she turned from the door, she had emptied her purse and had paid all the rent that was owing.

Before leaving the poor woman she had also arranged to keep her well supplied with work, and, strange to say, there were no regrets for the lost trimmings as she made her way homeward.

The new dress was not unbecoming, despite the refurbished lace which she was compelled to use for it. She was conscious that every woman of her acquaintance would know what the dress was trimmed with; b... her conscience whispered to her that she had done right. Moreover, the light of the better thought was on her face. And somehow her husband—to whom she had told the story—seemed more proud of her than ever; for when she donned the new dress for the first time he remarked, "Dear, I never remember to have seen you look so attractive as you do to day!"

Mrs. Churton had learned two lessons in a little while—one, that the poor might be clothed—fed from the trimmings of the rich; the other, that extravagance in dress is not always necessary to retain a husband's heart.

A CHAT ABOUT TOYS.

An Old-fashioned Doll-maker.

WHEN Pope came to the conclusion that the average boy or girl found delight in any plaything, provided it were livelier and louder than—if quite as empty as—the rattle of infancy, he had little idea how very particular and exacting the little people of a succeeding age would become when their toys were called in question. The children of the present generation would laugh to scorn the rudimentary playthings of their parents' childhood. My seven-year-old boy looks pityingly at me when I tell him of the paintless attractions of the marbles of my youth; and when his mother tells his little sister of the jointed wooden doll of years ago, the eyes of the little minx say, as plainly as children's eyes can, that "mother may be a very wise woman in many things, but that her education in the matter of dolls has been very sadly neglected!"

The doll, of course, takes the premier place among all the playthings of Britain. France has succeeded in establishing a reputation for wax dolls which England cannot expect to outvie, and though hundreds of thousands of dolls are made annually in London, Manchester, and other large centres, the Parisian doll, in her dainty costume and lady-like bearing, makes the home-made article appear very second-rate by comparison. The manufacture of wax dolls as it used to be—and, to some extent, still is—carried on in England is a most interesting process. When the hollow plaster moulds for the dolls' faces are ready, the workman places them in a row, heads downwards, and proceeds to pour in the melted wax. He fills about a dozen moulds or so, and when the last mould is filled he goes back to the first, pours back whatever wax may still remain fluid, and repeats this operation until he has gone through the entire dozen. The object of this is manifest. Were all the wax allowed to remain, the doll's head would be far too thick for future operations. By pouring off the liquid wax there is only left a medium coating, which has hardened by contact with the plaster mould.

A similar saving of material is effected in the insertion of the eyes in cheap dolls. The sockets having been cut away, the glass eyes are put in, and, after adjustment, a little wax is poured into the empty skull. Some of this, of course, adheres to the cold glass, and fastens the eyes firmly in their places. The superfluous wax is then poured off as before.

With dearer dolls a more intricate method is adopted to gives the eyes the appearance of a natural setting, and with dolls whose eyes are intended to open and shut quite an elaborate process is necessary. In order that the doll may appear asleep or awake, as its owner may determine, the eyes are attached to a wire which assumes the form of a diminutive two-pronged fork. Each prong is placed in a hole in the back of the eye, and then both eyes and wire are dipped into wax, and placed in the head. Plaster of Paris is used to fasten the eyes at the back, and, as the plaster begins to set, the eyes are kept in motion by a wire fastened to the handle of the fork-like arrangement in the

A Scene in a Dolls' Dressmaking Room.

head. Thus, when the plaster is fully set, the movement of the eye is unimpeded, and the sleeping or waking doll can be produced at pleasure.

The eyes completed, the lips, eyebrows, and nostrils are painted and made to look as near nature as the moderate sum charged for the finished article will permit of. In the better-class dolls the eyebrows are represented by real hair, but this is a too lengthy operation for the ordinary doll of commerce.

Nothing now remains, so far as the head is concerned, but to get the hair in position. Simple as this may appear, its relative cost in the higher-priced dolls is a consideration with manufacturers. The head having been placed upon a block, the workman proceeds to take little tufts of hair and place them beneath the surface of the wax with a small knife. In some of the dearest dolls only one or two hairs are inserted at once, and the process being a tedious one, necessarily adds to the cost of production, and consequently to the retail price of the doll. Its effect, however, is correspondingly artistic, for the hair has all the appearance of a natural growth, and can be brushed and combed at leisure by the happy little girl whose parents can afford to gratify her wish for a better-class doll. Cheap dolls, of course, can have no such care lavished on their flowing locks.

I have only dealt, so far, with the manufacture of dolls' heads; but the head, after all, is the only portion of doll anatomy which offers any points of interest. A very superficial examination of any doll will at once reveal the fact that a doll's body is composed, for the most part, of coarse calico, sawdust, and straw; and these do not furnish any striking details for a general description.

A Doll-maker at Work: Filling the Dolls.

Turning now to the toys for our little sons, we may say that what the doll is to girls, the pegtop is to boys. This article, however, has few intricacies deserving of notice.

But, if the ordinary pegtop has not kept pace with the century, it can hardly be said that another very popular toy among boys—the sailing-boat—has remained in the background of progress. The wonderful advance in shipbuilding during the past half-century has resulted in a corresponding improvement in the toy-boat family. Hence, it is only after a score of details have been completed, and the sails are put on, that the boat is ready for the toy-shop window.

While boys have a selection of boats, pegtops, rocking-horses, and other interesting articles in their toy *repertoire*, it would not be in accordance with the fitness of things were the juvenile girl restricted to her doll. Nor is she. Her pewter tea-set is to her "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever," in which she takes quite as much delight as does the boy in his imitation yacht. Pewter toys are not, I fancy, quite so popular as they used to be—delf articles having superseded them to a considerable extent. It will, nevertheless, surprise many little readers who may have this paper read to them, to know that their pretty pewter cups, saucers, and teapots are made from old pots, pans, and candlesticks, which, with lead and a little new metal, are melted down in the big iron melting-pot on the manufacturer's premises. Considerable practical experience is necessary in casting the little toys, yet practice enables the worker to produce an enormous number of articles in a comparatively brief period, and a work-girl accustomed to the process will turn out two or three thousand little teacups in a day. Spoons and similar articles are cast in sets, and

are cut up singly in very ingenious machines afterwards.

As to patented toys, they have, of late, attained to a considerable popularity among the juvenile portion of the community. The walking postman, the mechanical monkey, the walking crocodile, the locomotive, the speaking doll, and many other mechanical toys have not only realised considerable fortunes for their inventors, but have actually revolutionised the toy-trade. Children now-a-days want a toy which is not exactly an inanimate thing, but which will be so constructed as to act or move in a similar manner to its prototype.

Thus poor Caleb Plummer, who wished to go as close to natur' as he could for sixpence, would find that to-day the aspirations of youth in the matter of playthings could not easily be satisfied by the output of his little workshop, and that something more scientific than Noah's arks and inanimate dolls are needed to assuage the youthful longings of the boy or girl of 1894.

WHAT DOES YOUR CHILD READ?

BY JESSE PAGE.

THERE are mothers *and* mothers. Some, of course, consider their whole duty is accomplished if the face of the little one is clean and its pinafore beyond the criticism of the lady next door. They can heave a little sigh of satisfaction when the nursemaid, who only came yesterday, trundles off with the perambulator, and takes the darlings "off her hands" for the long morning, regardless of whatever may happen in the park or elsewhere. These are the mothers who keep a nursery, and who boast to some good soul who is very creditably anxious about *her* babies, "Oh, my dear, I never let *my* children be a bother to *me*." Such mothers never play with their little people, still less *pray* with them ("You see, my dear, I don't hold with stuffing religion down children's throats"), so the street boys have most to do with informing their minds, and Mary Jane takes the responsibility of their physical and spiritual welfare. What happens? Just what you would expect if you treated your garden plot so. The boys and girls grow up or are dragged up somehow, all weedy and any way. Perhaps they make their foolish, lazy, unprofitable servant of a mother cry in secret, and afterwards in their riper years, when she is under the green grass, they will say, "Yes, in a way I suppose she was a good mother to us, but she never let us love her much, and she never took any pains with us children." Poor silly mother!

But it is not to such mothers I am speaking in this paper. I want to address a friendly word to the mothers who realise the sacred responsibility of their calling. To you, the *real* mothers, who love your children and think nothing too good for them of time or strength or prayer or trouble, the genuine blessed mothers, and therefore the best of wives—to you I speak.

You see, in the matter of books, things are so different from what they were when we were children. I remember well that my books when I was a little boy were scarcely more than the fingers on one hand—the Bible of course, Pilgrim's Progress, Robinson Crusoe, the life and work of the Rev. Mr. Somebody on the Gold Coast, the history of my native town, and Wesley's Sermons. Stay! there was yet another, a salmon-coloured halfpenny "Juvenile Offering," which I received at certain seasons in exchange for a missionary box full of coppers. What a change since then! Now every shop window (even the drapers') have scores of beautiful books for boys and girls; and the best pens—yes, the very best, are hard at work writing them. There never was a time when literature for young eyes was so prolific and so choice as now.

When I began this paper I had half a mind to mention a whole string of good books suitable for your particular case; but then, as I don't happen to know how old your child is, or whether a boy or girl, it would be difficult to say. But if you care to write and ask such questions, I am sure the Editor will be pleased to help you, and I, too, will gladly do what I can. Let me now give you one or two general hints for your guidance in the matter.

Take the trouble to see what your boys and girls do read. If they are young, it will be almost entirely fiction; let it be of the very best. Perhaps they have been at school all day grinding away, and even by gas and candle light the ink-stained fingers and rough and weary heads have to peg on at home lessons. Poor young souls! let them find rest and recreation, not only in a good laugh or romping play, but in the entrancing pages of a really good story. All the distractions of vulgar fractions are soon forgotten in following the fortunes of some brave lad afloat on the breezy sea, and girlish fingers, stiff with thrumming scales, turn with happy relief the pages of the tale to see "how they get on." But look at it yourself; don't take the book peremptorily as though you distrusted them, but quietly for yourself have a peep into it, and let your motherly common-sense judge whether it is good stuff or silly nonsense.

Choose books which are definitely Christian. Don't listen to the common talk about "goody-goody"—that phrase in the mouth of many people now-a-days is meant to apply to everything evangelical. Don't fancy for a moment the work of Christian writers is dashed off anyhow. Writing these tales is with them a very sacred and responsible thing. I happen to know many of the ladies whose pens are well known throughout the kingdom as writers for children, and you may take my word for it these stories come from their very heart. These are tales which will weave Gospel truths in the texture of your child's memory, and will make the teachings of the Best of all the Books more real and clear to its understanding. If you do not know the names of the authors, the name of the publisher will be a safe guide; and when you see at the foot of the title-page Partridge, Religious Tract Society, Shaw, Nelson, Nisbet, Christian Knowledge Society, and others we could mention, you need not hesitate.

Watch the books read by your boys and girls in their teens. They are *not* too old for you to interfere. It is your duty as their mother to look into their reading. Just now there are books written of great ability, praised unhappily even in religious journals, whose pages will inevitably unsettle the religious convictions of their readers. With a seeming love for truth with a capital T, they deride Christ and His teaching, and flatter the young man and young woman with a sense of clever-mindedness until

they easily shake off the old-fashioned ideas of the Bible. There are also novels now-a-days which deal with social subjects from the devil's standpoint, and will poison the purity of a chaste and innocent mind, but these are scarcely so bad as the popular clever Agnostic infidelity of so-called religious or philosophic fiction. Beware, lest your child is turned adrift at the very threshold of manhood and womanhood by these alluring and pernicious works.

Have a care what you read yourself. Please remember that in this matter, as in others, the law and the testimony with your child is summed up in the words, "It must be right because mother does it." There are some mothers who subscribe to the local library of a small stationery shop and spend their leisure in devouring the vainest, most rubbishy of novels. And some day the daughter picks out the book from mother's work-basket and takes her cue (who can blame her?) from what she sees. Never let it be said of you, as is said so truly of many women, that you never read anything but novels. The biography of a good man, the history of a brave Christian worker, the utterances of a saintly man of God—books of this sort will, if in your hand, show that you are not only a Christian woman, but a woman with a Christian mind.

Talk with your boys and girls about their books. What nice little chats you might have with them if you liked! "Ah!" you say, "but, you see, I am not literary." Perhaps not, very few people are, and that is rather a blessing in the long run. But you can, if you like, talk about such things sensibly, and it is quite your own fault if you coolly drop into the ignoramous groove. The question is bound to arise, in some form or other, as to the value of such and such books, and remember you have done *your* duty if you have taken the moral and religious ground in giving judgment. Have an opinion of your own, and don't let these sharp young eyes see their mother just willing to drop all considerations just because everybody says a book is simply perfect, although a bit advanced.

Encourage your boys and girls to subscribe to a good children's magazine. We all know that children are intensely pleased with things which they can call their "very own." So is it with their magazines. Specially prepared to meet their wants, their interest in them month by month is very great; while their taste for more solid literary food, and their desire to form by-and-by a library of their own, are almost sure to be fostered by them.

Lastly, *Help your boys and girls to read their Bible by reading it yourself.* You know what this means. If other books are pushing the Bible out, claim for it the first place as the Word of the living God. Show them that *you* believe in it; if their father is on the down-grade, at any rate let the children see that "mother" is loyal to her Bible and her God. Some day they will be motherless, and perhaps the most precious thing you leave will be that Bible with its marked pages, and the most blessed and inspiring recollections they can have will be the picture of their mother reading reverently that Book, and afterwards kneeling in prayer to its Divine Author, asking Him to bless her child. Oh, mothers! mothers! how much you will have to answer for if you do not well discharge your high stewardship! Upon your training and example your boy's or girl's future turns—the moral safety of your child is, humanly speaking, in your hands.

"A Good Story."

May God give you grace solemnly to lay this to heart; and not only in the matter of books, but in all that pertains to your child's welfare, "by prayer and supplication make your requests known unto God."

Hints for Busy Housewives.

BRIGHT MIRRORS.—To clean looking-glasses and mirrors, dip a clean, damp sponge in spirits of wine, and rub it over the glass. Have some powdered blue tied in a rag, dust over the glass, and rub it lightly and quickly with a soft cloth, finishing with a silk handkerchief.

Nervousness.—A nervous person is not only miserable herself, but makes everybody else miserable. Take plenty of exercise in the open air, if you would cure yourself of nervousness.

A Simple Self-Acting Brake for bassinettes and perambulators has been invented and patented, with the idea of preventing the many serious accidents which occur through the carelessness or forgetfulness of the nursemaid in charge. By this invention, the hind wheels are instantly locked when the handle is released, and remain so until the handle is grasped again. Ladies who have to take their babies with them on their shopping expeditions should find this contrivance useful, and it would certainly put a stop to that very dangerous practice in which some thoughtless children are apt to indulge—namely, of giving the perambulator a push to see how far it will go.

Rags.—Never throw away rags because they are dirty, nor keep them in that state. Clean rags may go a great way towards keeping a house clean.

To Prevent Choking.—"If a child has swallowed anything that will not digest," says a noted physician, "particularly if it is sharp, let him eat immediately two or three pieces of dry bread. This is very apt to surround the object swallowed with a sort of coating. In addition, let the food for several days be more solid than usual, and under no circumstances give purgative medicine. The chances are that the child will feel no trouble from the result of his carelessness."

SOME NOTABLE MOTHERS.

III.—The Mother of Thomas Carlyle.

BY ROBERT COCHRANE.

MARGARET AITKEN, the second wife of James Carlyle, stone-mason, Ecclefechan, was spoken of by her eldest and highly gifted son, Thomas Carlyle, as "a woman to me of the fairest descent, that of the pious, the just, and the wise." To her care over him for both body and soul, he owed her "endless gratitude." She learned to write that she might have the pleasure of being able to correspond with her son Thomas, and no letters are more interesting in Froude's life of Carlyle than those from the loving, anxious mother. His biographer says truly that his love for his mother was the "strongest personal passion which he experienced through all his life;" Carlyle calls her besides "the tender, original, beautiful-minded mother."

The mother made sacrifices for the son, and whatever he earned, it was his delight that his mother should share it with him. Looking back fifty-six years afterwards, he recalled the frosty November morning when his mother and father walked with him through the village, to set him a little bit on his way in his hundred-mile walk to Edinburgh University.

Mrs. Carlyle, like many another Scottish mother, had an ambition to see her son's head "waggin' in the pulpit," and she grew alarmed when she discovered that he had no inclination in that direction. To show her tender solicitude for her son, we cannot do better than give one of her Mainhill letters. "I long to have a craik (talk), and look forward to August, trusting to see thee once more, but in hope the meantime. Oh, Tom, mind the golden season of youth, and remember your Creator in the days of your youth. Seek God while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. We hear that the world by wisdom knew not God. Pray for His presence with you, and His counsel to guide you. Have you got through the Bible yet? If you have, read it again; I hope you will not weary, and may the Lord open your understanding." The letter contains a reference to a small piece of ham, and a minding of butter which had been sent on, and concludes thus: "Good-night, Tom, for it is a very stormy night, and I must away to the byre to milk. Now, Tom, be sure to tell me about your chapters. No more from YOUR OLD MINNIE."

It must have been a great trial to the whole household when Mrs. Carlyle had a severe illness in the summer of 1817, by which her mind was affected, and she had to be placed for a few weeks under restraint, away from home. The trouble never returned again, but she did not readily forgive them for what they had done. The periodical supplies of oatmeal, cakes, butter, and under-garments when required came regularly to Thomas Carlyle, at his Edinburgh lodgings, when at college, placed there by the hands of a faithful mother; and the letters from her were always full of good advice.

Mr. Froude says that the mother was often as proud and wilful as the son; Thomas had offered her more presents than she cared to receive, which made her angry with him. She had been ill again, and fretted under the doctor's regulations. Thomas entreated her to change her diet and mode of life, and pointed out feelingly how valuable her health was to all the household.

His translations from the German, and all his books as they appeared, were eagerly read at Mainhill, and James Carlyle used to say that his wife looked as if she would "eat" the letters of her son Thomas when they arrived. When Thomas took the farm of Hoddam Hill, his mother and sister came to make him comfortable. But the farm was soon given up, and in 1826 the lease of Mainhill had also expired, when the whole Carlyle household moved to Scotsbrig, another farm near Ecclefechan, where the old folks spent the evening of their days.

We find Thomas after his marriage and settlement at Comely Bank, a northern suburb of Edinburgh, sending his mother a warm invitation to his home, and she who had never been beyond Annandale, and had never seen a finer interior than that of a Scottish farmhouse, arrived in the Scottish capital in December, 1827. She heard Dr. Andrew Thomson, the famous preacher, and visited Greyfriars churchyard to see the tomb of the Scottish Martyrs, as well as John Knox's house. "In stormy days," wrote her son to his father at Scotsbrig, "she sews wearing raiment, or reads the wonderful articles of my writing in the *Edinburgh Review*. She has also had a glimpse of Francis Jeffrey." Nevertheless, like every true mother, accustomed to the yoke, she fidgeted not a little, said she had never been idle for two weeks of her life before, and was certain they must be in a "hubble of work at home." She remained four weeks, and returned home in the coach by way of Hawick. At Scotsbrig, in 1832, one of the sisters wrote that she was healthier than usual that winter, "but terribly hadden down wi' anxiety"—the mother's heart yearned over her scattered family.

After Carlyle had settled in London, he wrote the same kindly letters to his mother, in which his wife frequently joined him. As his circumstances allowed of it, he would enclose a bank note to buy her some warm clothing and creature comforts. When the American publisher sent £50 from Boston on account of the "French Revolution," he had to send £5 of this as a Christmas present to her. "The kitlin ought to bring the auld cat a mouse in such a case as that." He was feeling in better spirits besides, as his books were beginning to move off. When she was old and ailing he humoured her weaknesses, and bade her go up to the moor on a sunny day, as it would be like a sermon to her pious heart to witness the world growing green again. She brightened up always at his letters and visits, and at the letters from her daughter-in-law. Carlyle was her constant companion when at Scotsbrig, and drove her about in the old gig, visiting friends here and there.

In July, 1853, she received her last tokens of love from her affectionate son. The stroke was terrible to Carlyle, who had hurried to Scotsbrig to be with her in her final moments. In his last letter to her he wrote: "Oh, my dear mother! let it ever be a comfort to you, however weak you are, that you did your part honourably and well while in strength, and were a noble mother to me and to us all. . . . May God reward you, dearest mother, for all you have done for me! I never can." They heard her mutter on her death-bed, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." And the last night of her life, Carlyle notes in his journal, would never be effaced from his memory, when she gradually slept away, on Christmas Day, 1853. She was in her eighty-fourth year.

SIMPLE TABLE DECORATION.

BY LINA ORMAN COOPER.

MOST women nowadays have a keen appreciation of the beautiful. They follow only too literally the apostolic injunction, "Whatsoever things are lovely—think on those things."

With many this love is an instinct. They like pretty faces, pretty clothes, pretty rooms, yet they cannot make the most of their own beauty, cannot choose the most appropriate clothes, cannot carry their floating ideas of home decoration into effect.

I think mothers, especially, should neglect no opportunity of training their children's taste and cultivating a sense of beauty. A daintily-kept table, a refined, graceful home will do much more to keep our young folk "straight" than perhaps we are aware of. From a beautiful home on earth their thoughts are easily led to a more beautiful abiding-place above—that home "adorned" with a Saviour's presence and "beautified" by a Father's care.

Many women connect decoration with a long purse and plenty of servants. Now, I have been in all sorts of houses. The most daintily-served meal I ever partook of was in a curate's house, where the income was under £150 a year, and the wife did most of the housework! The memory of that flower-decked repast is with me vividly as I write. It helps me to realise that simple table decoration is within reach of the many. A certain workman's lodging, with its smooth clean cloth and bunch of fragrant wall-flowers, adds that it is within the reach of all.

In the following pen pictures of table decoration I have tried to suggest what a moderate garden, a country walk, or a few pence can provide. Elaborate and expensive schemes of floral colouring I have avoided on purpose. Perhaps I may give such in another paper.

We will make our first "table" a Daisy one. On the cloth, right in the centre, spread a square of crinkled, gold-coloured Liberty crêpe. You can buy such—I have one—for 6½d. It has tinsel crescents and curves on it. Try to get the same, they will catch the light. This crêpe lasts for years! Gather up in loose soft folds. In the middle put a white china vase; let it be pure white—a figure on one side, perhaps. At the four corners of the crêpe put smaller vases to match. I have a set of Coalport ware, but very artistic shapes may be bought for a few pence and will look very well. Only, whatever vases you may use, if only white jam-pots, let them glisten and shine with cleanliness. Dirt and decoration will never do.

A Tasteful Design in Daisies and Grasses.

From your nearest field gather a big bunch of ox-eyes and a good bundle of quaking grass. Arrange your flowers *one by one* in the receptacles ready for them, lightened with spears of quaker and heads of the wild oat grass that grows so freely everywhere. This is one of the loveliest of table decorations. I often prefer it in summer even to a rose symphony! The yellow of the crêpe matches the gold of the daisy eyes so exactly. And it has one great recommendation—ox-eyes and grass remain fresh for a week at least.

Sometimes an arrangement of greens is restful to the eye, and as leaves are plentiful, the laying on the table cannot be called extravagant!

Take a glass (common blown glass will do, though Venetian of course would be better) about eighteen inches high. It must have a wide crinkled mouth. Tie together four trails of smilax or sweet-scented clematis, each trail to be at least two yards long. At the point you "splice," attach a small leaden weight. Lay this in your vase; the

weight will keep the fresh cut stems under water. Each spray must be brought from the middle of your high vase to the corner of the table and there pinned firmly. At the four points where these are attached, lay boquets of Virginia creeper, fresh young beech sprays, or any bits of feathery green ferns; tie each bunch together lightly with narrow pale-green bébé ribbon. Then fill the centre piece with sheaths of iris leaves, rat-tail ferns, wild arum foliage, and asparagus fronds.

You will be surprised at the coolness of this arrangement on a hot day. It only requires a quick eye too, as material enough can be found in any country walk. The children could be trained to look out for suitable sprays in the hedges and along the ditches as they come from school.

Chrysanthemums shall be our next picture. This decoration will give us much *colour*. We shall want this in the chill autumn days.

An oblong piece of looking-glass, framed in moss and bits of fern, is first required. Then two vases, yellow glass by choice, are put upon it and filled with copper and terra-cotta and bronze chrysanthemums. At the corners of the mirror four small receptacles of the same are reflected. If guests are expected—and even those with limited incomes need not be debarred from entertaining a friend occasionally—a tiny bouquet tied with yellow or terra-cotta ribbon, can be laid in each place. It will give an unexpectedly refined touch to the "party"!

The warmth and glow of this arrangement is indescribable. It needs to be seen, and is my favourite autumn scheme.

Remember, there should be no crowding of blooms. A very few long-stemmed flowers are needed, and perhaps a dozen fern fronds.

Any November day sixpence would purchase material even in the streets of London.

Foliage makes another lovely table decoration. Take two small Liberty-worked squares (you can get them for 3d. apiece); put them point to point diamond-wise. In the centre place a ruby glass, tall by preference. Copper-beech, green-beech, crimson begonia leaves, trails of Ampelopsis or any other Virginia creeper, sprays of blackberry, wild rose brambles, fronds of frosted bracken, heads of giant hemlock, and a few winter cherries may be procured.

Put the stiff-growing things in the vase, the others tied together with bébé ribbon and laid at the six points of the centre slip. All this decoration, as you will see, is in the middle of the table, and in no way interferes with family or guests at a crowded table, which is one recommendation.

Do you like yellow? It is my favourite colour. Gather, then, a bunch of orange kingcups from the nearest brook, or a handful of common buttercups from a field, arrange them daintily in willowy-green ware, and you have a scheme of colour and decoration at once!

Or, in the spring, what do you say to stately daffy-down-dillies, with their own spears—nothing else, unless a few sprays of ivy—in brass specimen tubes?

Violets look lovely in 1d. fish bowls, water-lilies in cheap blue Kaga ware.

Even some lengths of common ground-ivy, laid flat on the cloth, between the cover dishes and round the water bottles, takes off the plainness and bareness of a dinner-table, and gives an idea of *care* in details.

The Editor will not let me write about *evening* decorations. So I must not discourse about copper vases, brass candlesticks, Benares finger-bowls, orange lamp-shades, or any of the etceteras that are only *luxuries*.

All the same, dear mothers, I think you and I must try to make our dinner-tables as tempting and natty and comfortable as possible. Flowers may seem expensive. Time is still more precious. I realise all this, for I am a house mother myself. Still, I believe in the *educational* value of colour and form.

Take some trouble to make things around you bright and beautiful. A quaint old writer has said—

"A little thing is a little thing,
But faithfulness in little things
Is a very great thing."

I will add a word from another source—

"*Nothing* is little to brighten home,
Or small, if done in His Name."

PRACTICAL PAPERS ON EVERYDAY NURSING.

BY E. M. WATERWORTH, AUTHOR OF "MOTHERS AT HOME," "ABOUT OUR FOOD," ETC.

VIII.—More Serious Ills (*continued*).

I SUPPOSE everyone is more or less frightened at the very name of some diseases, and diphtheria is certainly one of them. Of course in a set of papers such as I am writing, it is perfectly impossible for me to give descriptions of every ill that our mortal flesh is heir to—I should want the whole magazine to myself! So I am obliged to pick out those which strike me as being the most common, and which, with care and obedience to the doctor's orders, a sensible mother ought to be able to nurse.

Diphtheria is one of these, as well as the milder form of diphtheritic sore throat.

The symptoms are great depression and feverishness, and a cold in the head, accompanied with a husky hoarseness in the voice. Next come difficulty in swallowing, a stiffness in the neck, and swelling of the glands in the throat. As soon as your patient complains of the stiffness, send off for the doctor at once; it may or may not be the beginning of diphtheria, but it is too serious a matter for you to undertake alone.

On the other hand, as one of the terrible characteristics of the disease is its weakening power, you must not sit with your hands folded till the doctor comes—you must be preparing your patient for the fight for life which may lie before him.

Put him to bed, open the window at the top two inches, and keep it so night and day. Never mind if the snow is on the ground, fires and hot steam must keep up the temperature of the room, but the window must be open. Send for some chlorate of potash, and dissolve as much as you can in a tumbler of water, and let your patient use it frequently as a gargle. That does not sound a very exact prescription I know, but you need not be afraid; the water will only absorb a certain amount of potash. Set some strong beef tea going (you shall have the recipe later on); and as that takes a good time to make, give your

patient as much egg and milk as he will take meanwhile.

Make up your mind to follow faithfully every single direction of the doctor—your patient's life depends on it—and pay special attention to all he says as to the amount and quality of the food to be given. Keep your patient lying down and as quiet as you possibly can, and don't go about with a face a yard long. Be bright in the sick-room, though your heart may be nearly breaking. Every smile and cheerful word of yours is needed to counteract the depressing influence of the disease.

There, I am not going to tell you any more about long illnesses, but I should like to forearm you for sudden emergencies such as

FITS.—There are two or three different kinds, and many a life has been lost, because bystanders did not know one from the other. Let me try to give you a simple way of remembering which is which, and what ought to be done for each.

A FAINTING FIT comes from *want* of blood to the brain, the patient's face is perfectly pale and you can hardly feel his heart beating. Therefore what you have to do is to try to make the blood flow properly to the head. If there is space, lay your patient flat on the floor or sofa, and prevent people crowding round—he needs all the air he can get. If you should be in a church, or concert room, where you cannot lay the patient down, force his head down between his knees. In either case loosen everything, sprinkle cold water over his face, and rub the palms of his hands. A fit of

APOPLEXY comes from exactly an opposite cause, and requires different treatment. There has been too much blood to the head, the veins have become too full, and one has burst. The patient's face is red, his heart is beating strongly, and he is snoring heavily. This stertorous breathing is one of the sure signs of apoplexy. Now, what must you do? On no account lay him flat. Place him in a comfortable position with head and chest raised, and unfasten his clothing, especially about the throat. Apply cold cloths to his head and hot mustard and water to his feet. On no account give him brandy or any other stimulant. Send for the doctor at once.

In EPILEPSY the sufferer falls to the ground with a sudden cry, foaming perhaps at the mouth, and sometimes with contortions. All you can do is to loosen all clothing at the throat and wrists, or anywhere else where it may be tight. I have seen a man tear the sleeve out of a new linen shirt because we had forgotten to undo one wristband. Lay the patient on his back, with his head slightly raised. Restrain his struggles, so as to prevent him hurting himself, and quietly wait till the fit is over. He will probably then fall asleep; if so, let him be quiet and undisturbed as long as he will.

With HYSTERICAL FITS the treatment is quite different from any other kind. Whatever you do, don't sympathise. On the other hand, don't be needlessly unkind. Give a teaspoonful of sal volatile in half a wineglass of water and leave the patient alone. She will soon recover when she finds that no one is going to take any notice of her. Hysteria is, I think, one of the curses of the present generation, and mothers should be specially warned against it. I know of three or four cases now amongst my own friends, where the girls who should be their mothers' right hands, are a source of unending sorrow and care.

I suppose every woman has more or less tendency to go into hysterics when suffering from some shock or sorrow, but that tendency should be restrained from the very first. Hysteria reminds me always of the snake which the man cherished in his bosom; it was harmless enough at first, but at last it bit him. So when our girls begin to show signs of hysteria, we perhaps pet them and make semi-invalids of them, little thinking that we are possibly preparing them for a wretched life. Day by day, year by year, the hysterical fits will increase in strength, until at last they will become an absolute disease, and the girl who should be our comfort and help will be a languid invalid, a nuisance to herself and everyone else. That is not all; melancholia and mental depression often follow.

If you would save those you love from this, nip the disease in the bud, for it does become a disease if you leave it to itself. Give your girls an object in life; let each one have her hobby, let each one have her work. An idle, aimless life is the forcing-ground for hysteria.

Life is made up of contrasts, and the young ladies who pride themselves on going into hysterics at the sight of a mouse, or the sound of a cow, may feel indignant with me for saying that whilst I wrote of hysteria I remembered that very common but most uninteresting disease—

MUMPS.—Nobody ever gets much sympathy whilst suffering from mumps, because one does look so very unromantic with a big swelling in one's face—so different from the pale, languid victims of hysteria. Never mind, I would rather have the mumps if I were bound to have either.

The symptoms are headache and a tired feeling, which last several days, accompanied with slight fever. There is a pain under one ear, too, which becomes worse when the patient opens his mouth, or bites his food. Then comes the swelling under the lobe of the ear. It may appear only on one side, or it may attack both in turn. It lasts from two days to a week.

The treatment is simple. Keep the patient in one room, and regulate the bowels. Cover the swelling with cotton wool, give soft, light food—such as broth, gruel, and eggs—and take no one's advice but the doctor's.

A TRUE WIFE.—Ah! the true rule is—a true wife in her husband's house is his servant; it is in his heart that she is queen. Whatever of the best he can conceive, it is her part to be; whatever of the highest he can hope, it is hers to promise; all that is dark in him she must purge into purity, all that is failing in him she must strengthen into truth; from her, through all the world's clamour, he must win his promise; in her, through all the world's warfare, he must find his peace.—*John Ruskin.*

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THE BIBLE AND THE LITTLE ONES.—If you earnestly desire that your child should read the Bible, give him a copy of his own. The mere fact of possession will prove a valuable stimulus to the study of God's Word.

* * * *

THE BABY is God's messenger. By it He shows what love was in His heart when He created man.

* * * *

IN sorrow, sickness, pain, and earthly strife,
And all the changes of this fleeting life,
How sweet it is peacefully to look up
And know a Father fills the bitter cup!
To feel 'tis mercy lifts the chastening rod,
And drives us from all other rest to God!

HINTS ON HOME DRESSMAKING.

THERE are many novel materials in thin woollen fabrics, very suitable for children's as well as adults' wear, being shown this season. The looser textures, however, are not very serviceable, as they fray out at the seams very quickly. Little girls and young ladies can have very useful dresses made up with a plain skirt trimmed with rows of plain or fancy braid. An Eton jacket or blouse, either of cotton or woollen stuff, can be used with this skirt, which will make a very useful holiday costume. Thin cloth, serge, or brown holland can be used; the latter is very suitable when a cool summer dress is required. For young children there is nothing prettier than the sailor dress. Smocked or gathered dresses, both in cotton and woollen stuff, and very little trimmed, are still in vogue for the tiny ones.

Fig. 29.

Fig. 29. Here we have illustrated a stylish lady's dress. Dark green whipcord is the material used, and the trimming can be of moiré or velveteen, with a narrow edging of beaded braid. The skirt should be three and a half to four yards wide, and is laid in pleats at the back, while the side opens over a strip of pleated velveteen or moiré, or the same material that the dress is made of can be used if preferred. The body, which opens over a plastron of silk, is quite plain at the back, while the front has deep revers reaching from the neck to the waist. These are cut up into square tabs and edged with a bead trimming. The gigot sleeve is employed for this dress, and is finished with a deep pointed cuff. A serpentine-shaped basque finishes the waist; it is turned back in front, and faced with the silk or velvet trimming.

Fig. 30.

Fig. 30. This is one of those useful little dresses so easily made and so suitable for a little boy from three to four years of age. It can be worn over petticoats, or little knickers can be made and buttoned on to a bodice of grey or white calico. The pattern is suitable for cotton or woollen stuff. If made in the former, striped drill will be found most suitable; for the latter, serge or speckled cheviot will be best. The little blouse can be made to slip on over the head, when the front will be sewn in on the right side, and hooked under on the left. The better way, we think, is to have it buttoned all down the front and tied with a bow of ribbon where the collar is put on. In this case the front will not be attached to the coat, but buttoned on the shoulders, and tied round the waist with tape strings and loops. A white flannel front could be used instead of the one made of the same material as the coat. A full sleeve is set into a little band at the wrist, and finished with a braid trimming. Braid also finishes the waistband, collar, and front.

Fig. 31. The pattern shown under this number is made of worked embroidery flouncing. The skirt is about eighteen inches long and two yards wide, and is gathered and stitched to the body. Below the yoke used for the body the material is set on in inch pleats or gathers, and drawn in at the waist in the same way. A bertha of embroidery edging ornaments the front and back of the body, and falls like an epaulette over the shoulder. This can be trimmed with ribbon or not, according to taste. Biscuit-coloured ribbon looks very well on a white dress. The puffed sleeve is finished with a deep embroidery cuff. A washing sun hat or bonnet can be made with similar embroidery edging and ribbon to correspond with this dress.

Fig. 31.

Fig. 32. There is always a demand at this season of the year for a shoulder cape such as we show under this number, so that we feel sure it will become a favourite with our readers. A cape of this kind admits of being made in almost any material, dress stuff, cloth, or silk. We have seen some very elegant patterns made in black moiré. Our model consists of a kind of pointed yoke-piece at the back, which in front is turned back like revers, instead of closing up to the neck. Then there are two pelerine capes set on; these are wide on the shoulders, and get gradually narrower both back and front. Two long ends are set on to the fronts, which reach about half way down the dress skirt. A ribbon sewn on to the waist at the back is brought round and tied with bows and long ends over the wider sash-like ends of material, making a pretty finish.

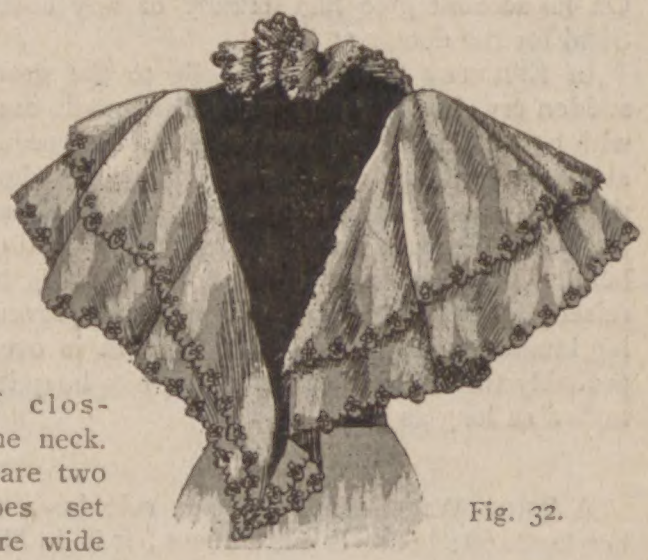

Fig. 32.

Flat patterns can be supplied. Figs. 29, 30, 31, and 32, 6½d. each, post free. Address "M. C. Pattern," 9, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.